

Coille an Fhàsaich by Donald McKillop

Ri taobh coill' an Fhàsaich, feasgar àghmhor leam fhìn
bha na h-eòin air na crannaibh 's iad ri caithream gu binn;
gu robh sìth air an Eilean fad mo sheallaidh mu'n cuairt
's bha mo smuaint air mo chàirdean a bha tàmh leam ann uair.

O, nach prìseal leam Hàllain, sìos gu bàgh na h-Àird Mhòir:
air a thràigh bha sinn daonnan cheart cho aotrom ri eòin;
ach a-nis chan eil mànràn fealla-dhà ann, no spòrs
's far 'n do chluich sinn air leacan an-diugh caidlidh na ròin.

Sìos a deas air an àirde chi mi sgàile de sgleò ,
mar brèid geal air a' sgaoileadh air bùird aosda MhicLeòid ;
's e na neòil bhi gun ghruaimean a dh'fhàg suain air gach àit',
's chì mi faileas nam bruachan an ceann shuas Loch a' Bhàigh.

Chi mi cuimheachan sgrìobhte air an linn nach eil beò
anns gach tobht' agus gàrradh , gach càrn agus crò,
anns gach àirigh th'air monadh agus cairidh th' air tràigh,
nach gabh leughadh le coigreach, mun a' chuideachd a dh'fhàg.

Chan eil feum dhomh bhith 'g ionndrainn luchd mo rùin anns an uair:
mar a bha iad tha sinne , tacan goirid air chuairt:
ach nach sona mar bha iad, rè an làithean gun ghò,
air bheag chùraim no èislein, ann an Eilean a' Cheò.

Translation:

Beside Fasach wood on a glorious afternoon by myself
the birds were on the tree-tops singing joyfully, sweetly;
there was peace on the island as far as I could see all round,
& my thoughts were on my loved ones who lived here with me once.

O, how dear to me is Hallain, down to the bay of Ardmòr
on its shore we were always as light-hearted as birds;
but now there are no happy sounds of joking or sporting,
and where we played on the rocks today sleeps the seal.

Down to the west on the promontory I see a veil of mist
like a white cloth spread over MacLeod's ancient tables;
because the clouds are not looming everywhere seems drowsy
& I can see the reflection of its banks in the far side of Loch a' Bhaigh.

I see a memorial inscribed for generations no longer alive
in every ruined house & garden, every cairn and sheep-fold,
in every sheiling on the hill & every water-break on the shore
that the stranger cannot decipher, for the folk who have gone away.

There's no use in my longing for my loved ones now:
as they were, so are we-on life's short journey;
but were they not happy to be, through their innocent days,
with little care or suffering, in the Isle of the Mist.

(with thanks to Anne Lorne Gillies)

Glossary V1 **ri taobh**- beside **coille** - wood, **fasach**-shelter **feasgar**-afternoon **àghmhòr**- glorious
team fhìn -by myself **na h-eòin**- the birds **air crannaibh** - on the tree-tops
caithream - singing joyfully **gu binn** -sweetly **sith**- peace **fad mo sheallaidh**-as far as I could see
mun cuairt - around **smuaint'** - thoughts **mo chàirdean**- my friends **tàmh ann**- living there
leam - with me **uair**-(at)one time

v2 **priseal**-precious **leam**- to me **sios gu bàgh**- down to (the) bay **air a thràigh** - on the shore **daonnan**- always **ceart cho aotrom ri** - just as light(hearted) as
ach a nis- but now **mànran**-happy sounds **fealla-dha**- joking **spòrs**- sporting
far an do chluìch- where we played **leacan**-rocks **an-diugh**- today **caidlidh**- sleeping
na ròin-of the seal

V3 **sios a deas** - down to the west **air an àirde**- on the promontory **chi mi**- I see
sgàile- a veil **sgleò** - mist **mar brèid geal** - like a white cloth **air a' sgoileadh**- spread out
air bùird - on the tables **aosda**- ancient **MhicLeòid**- of Macleod.
na neòil- the clouds **gun ghruaimean** - wwithout looming **suain**- drowsiness **gach àit'** - everywhere **faileas**- reflection **nam bruachan**- of the banks **an ceann shuas** - the far side

V4 **cuimhneachan**-memorials **sgrìobhte**- written **an linn**- the generations
nach ell beò- who are not alive **gach tobht'**- every ruin **gàrradh** - garden **càrn**- cairn
crò- sheep-fold **àirigh**-sheiling **monadh**-hill **cairidh** - water-break **tràigh** - shore
nach gabh leughadh- that can't be read **coigreach** - strangers **mun a' chuideachd** - about the folk
a dh'fhàg- who went away.

V5 **Chan eil feum** - there's no use **dhomh** - to me **bhith g'ionndrainn**- to be missing/longing for
luchd- folk **mo rùin**-my beloved **anns an uair** - now/at this time **mar a bha iad** - as they were
tha sinne- we are **tacan**- journey **goirid** -short **nach sona**- was it not happy
rè- throughout **an làithean**- their days **gun ghò**- innocent
air bheag chùram- without care **no èislean**- nor suffering **Eilean a' Cheò**- Isle of Mist